



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

REGIONAL AFGHAN MUNICIPALITIES PROGRAM FOR URBAN POPULATIONS – REGIONAL COMMAND NORTH

MONTHLY REPORT: AUGUST 2012



Photo: Municipal officials and citizen representatives in Maymana hold a kick-off meeting on August 7, 2012, for the second round RAMP UP North sub-project to build public latrines in the city. The sub-contractor began construction on the project the next day.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2012

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by DAI.

REGIONAL AFGHAN MUNICIPALITIES PROGRAM FOR URBAN POPULATIONS – REGIONAL COMMAND NORTH

MONTHLY REPORT: AUGUST 2012

Program Title: Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations – Regional Command North

Sponsoring USAID Office: USAID/Afghanistan

Contract Number: 306-C-00-11-00510-00

Contractor: DAI

Date of Publication: SEPTEMBER 15, 2012

Author: RAMP UP North Project Staff

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS & TERMS	II
ABOUT RAMP UP NORTH	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
Programmatic Highlights	2
PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES	3
Capacity Building	3
Sustainable Service Delivery Improvement Sub-projects	4
Revenue Generation	6
Citizen Engagement.....	7
PLANNED SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES	8
APPENDIX: RU-N ONE-PAGERS.....	9

ABBREVIATIONS & TERMS

CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
CO	Contracting Officer
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DAI	Development Alternatives, Incorporated
DoWA	Department of Woman's Affairs
EA	Embedded Advisor
GDMA	General Directorate of Municipal Affairs
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTL	Municipal Team Leader
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAAG	Public Administration Advisory Group
PBB	Performance Based Budgeting
PBT	Project-Based Training
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RAMP UP	Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations (USAID program)
RC (E,W,N,S)	ISAF Regional Command East, West, North, South
RU-N	RAMP UP North
SDAG	Service Delivery Advisory Group
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SOW	Scope of Work
TA	Technical Assistance
TAMIS	Technical Assistance Management Information System
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of trainers
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

Terms

<i>Gozar</i>	Neighborhood
<i>Nahya</i>	Municipal District
<i>Qaryadars</i>	Village leaders
<i>Wakil or kalanter</i>	<i>Nahya</i> or <i>gozar</i> representative
<i>Tashkeel</i>	Administrative structure of a GIRoA entity
<i>Safayi tax</i>	Service charge and property tax
<i>Moustoufiat</i>	The provincial-level branch of the Ministry of Finance

ABOUT RAMP UP NORTH

The purpose of the Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations for Regional Command North (RAMP UP North) is to create effective, responsive, democratic, transparent, and accountable municipal governance in the nine provinces that comprise the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF's) Regional Command North.

RAMP UP North will: (1) increase the capacity of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) municipal officials, (2) markedly improve the delivery of municipal services to citizens in target municipalities, and (3) increase municipal capacity to enable, support, and sustain economic growth. As a result of the RAMP UP North, Afghan citizens will receive better services, understand the responsibilities of municipal leaders, play an active role in the municipal decision-making process, and see local governance structures as legitimate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the month of August, RU-N began implementing six of the second round sub-projects in Sar-e-Pul, Aybak, Kunduz, Sheberghan, Maymana and Taloqan. Kick-off meetings were held during the first week of August, and construction work on all six projects began on August 8. During August, RU-N advisors were also engaged in anti-corruption training for key officials. Embedded advisors participated in a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on Fraud Awareness from August 6-8, and then organized workshops for municipal officials in all nine municipalities by the end of August.

The RU-N team was also engaged this month in conducting assessments in all nine municipalities on the feasibility of implementing One Stop Shops or Citizen Service Centers. The assessments were conducted as part of overall RU-N activities to plan and prepare for the upcoming year's work plan, and as a result of the assessment RU-N determined that five of the nine northern municipalities meet the requirements for successfully establishing these centers.

PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

- RU-N has continued to make progress on all three rounds of sub-projects this month. Construction of the Maymana Women's Park Improvement sub-project, which was the final first round sub-project, reached substantial completion and the final inspection of the construction work was held on August 7. Implementation began on 6 second round sub-projects, with the remaining 3 second round sub-projects reaching the final stages of the procurement process. RU-N advisors also continued to make progress on the development of the third round project concepts, with two municipalities already drafting project concepts for review by the end of August.
- RU-N advisors provided capacity building support to municipalities as part of the project development and implementation process. Project kick-off meetings provided an important platform for RU-N advisors to work with municipal officials and citizen groups to clarify roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders during the implementation process of the sub-projects. RU-N advisors were also engaged in delivering Fraud Awareness Training to municipal officials in all nine municipalities throughout the month.
- On the Sar-e-Pul Post-Flood Assistance Project, this month, design and construction plans, specifications and supporting documents were completed for two roads and culverts rehabilitation projects, the construction of a pedestrian footbridge, and the rehabilitation of a flood protection wall, with the RFPs issued on August 16.
- Business registration and licensing activities continued this month in Aybak, Faizabad, Pul-e-Khumri, Sar-e-Pul, and Taloqan, with advisors assisting municipal officials in developing and implementing enforcement options that will ensure that local business owners pay their registration fees.

PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES

CAPACITY BUILDING

Technical Assistance (TA)

This month, RU-N advisors provided technical assistance to municipal officials on the implementation of the second round sub-projects. Advisors in Sar-e-Pul, Aybak, Kunduz, Sheberghan, Maymana and Taloqan worked with municipal officials to organize and hold kick-off meetings to start the project implementation phase, with specific support on ensuring that all stakeholders clearly understood the work expected of the contractor, and the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders during the implementation process. RU-N advisors also continued to provide technical assistance to municipalities on the business registration process, specifically providing support and advice on how to enforce the payment of business registration taxes in a timely manner by business owners. Advisors in Pul-e-Khumri and Faizabad held meetings with municipal officials on enforcement options.



RU-N advisors in Kunduz hold a joint meeting with the Mayor, the sub-contractor's engineering team, and the Municipal Engineer to discuss progress on the second round RU-N park improvement project on August 27, 2012.

Consultations

With support from the RU-N technical team, advisors consulted with municipal officials in all nine municipalities this month to conduct a readiness assessment for the possibility of establishing One Stop Shops, or Citizen Service Centers, in municipal offices to streamline functions. Advisors assessed the types of services that could be provided by the proposed centers, as well as available space, staffing and other requirements. The results of the assessment, which was held in all nine municipalities, determined that five municipalities meet the criteria for successfully establishing the centers: Aybak, Maymana, Pul-e-Khumri, Sheberghan and Taloqan. The assessment was conducted as part of preparing for the work plan for RU-N's second option year. RU-N advisors also held regular consultations with municipal officials on the progress of project implementation in Sar-e-Pul, Kunduz, Pul-e-Khumri, Aybak and Maymana.

Regional Workshops/Conferences

While no regional workshops were held this month, RU-N advisors organized and delivered anti-corruption training in all nine municipalities. Advisors participated in a Training of Trainers (ToT) session on Fraud Awareness in the Mazar-e-Sharif regional office from August 6-8, and then began organizing workshops to deliver the training to municipal officials beginning on August 15. By August 30, all municipalities had organized at least one round of training for municipal officials, with Aybak and Sheberghan also organizing a second training session for officials that had missed the first round. Feedback from municipal officials following the training was strongly positive, with most officials saying that increased knowledge about what actions constitute fraud can help prevent corruption in the municipality.



RU-N advisors in Taloqan facilitate a workshop for municipal officials on Fraud Awareness and anti-corruption prevention techniques on August 14, 2012.

Functional Training / Project Based Training (PBT)

Advisors continued to provide functional training to municipal officials as part of the ongoing development and implementation of sub-projects. Functional training on the procurement process, specifically on bidder eligibility and qualifications, was provided to municipal officials as part of the bid openings and evaluations in Pul-e-Khumri on August 7 and Mazar-e-Sharif on August 6 and 9. RU-N advisors also engaged municipal officials in beginning to monitor project implementation in Aybak and Pul-e-Khumri.

SUSTAINABLE SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT SUB-PROJECTS

This month, the second round of RU-N sub-projects began the implementation phase, while the first round of sub-projects was completed and RU-N advisors continued to develop concepts for the third round of sub-projects.

The final first round sub-project, the Maymana Women's Park Project, has reached completion, with the final inspection of the construction work held on August 7. Advisors in Maymana also coordinated closely with the Maymana Municipality on starting construction on the municipal contribution to the project – the boundary wall for the park and public latrines. By the end of August, the municipality was finalizing the contracting process for the construction work on the boundary wall.

On August 8, six of the second-round RU-N sub-projects began implementation, following kick-off meetings held earlier that week. Sub-projects in Aybak, Sheberghan, Maymana, Sar-e-Pul, Taloqan and Kunduz are now under construction and advisors are monitoring progress with municipal officials and citizens. The other three second round sub-projects in Mazar-e-Sharif, Faizabad and Pul-e-Khumri also reached the final procurement stages during this month, with bid openings and evaluations held for Faizabad on August 7-8, and Mazar-e-Sharif on August 6 and 9.

Concepts for third round sub-projects also continued to be developed this month. Following the completion of the Service Delivery Improvement Plans (SDIPs) last month, advisors worked to develop project concepts. RU-N engineers also began developing designs and bills of quantity (BoQs) for projects. A number of projects identified feasibility issues (land ownership) and have been managing these potential problems. In Pul-e-Khumri, for example, issues with the proposed site of a public latrine for the market led the municipality to change their proposed project concept to their alternate site, which was identified with input from the SDAG. Sar-e-Pul, which had previously proposed a market in a location that had feasibility issues, also is similarly re-evaluating the selection of their third round project. RU-N advisors are also using these discussions on project selection with municipal officials as an additional method of reinforcing concepts of project feasibility and sustainability.



RU-N advisors in Sar-e-Pul hold a site inspection in conjunction with the Municipal Construction Manager for the second round RU-N subproject to improve the city's wheat and flour market on August 26, 2012.

Summaries of the status of the first, second and third rounds of RU-N sub-projects can be found in the tables below:

First Round Sustainable Service Delivery Improvement Sub-projects —Status as of August 30, 2012			
Municipality	Sub-project Type	Status	Notes
Aybak	Park Improvement	Closed	Closed Out
Faizabad	Trash Collection	Completed	
Kunduz	Trash Collection	Completed	
Maymana	Women's Park Improvement	Completed	Final inspection held on August 7
Mazar-e-Sharif	Trash Collection	Completed	
Pul-e-Khumri	Trash Collection	Completed	
Sar-e-Pul	Park Improvement	Completed	
Sheberghan	Trash Bin Fabrication	Completed	
Taloqan	Trash Collection	Completed	

Second Round Sustainable Service Delivery Improvement Sub-projects —Status as of August 30, 2012			
Municipality	Sub-project Type	Status	Notes
Aybak	Public Latrines	Implementing	Kick off meeting held August 8 ; implementation began August 8
Faizabad	Public Latrines	Procurement	Bids closed August 30
Kunduz	City Park Improvement	Implementing	Kick off meeting held August 6 ; implementation began August 8
Maymana	Public Latrines	Implementing	Kick off meeting held August 7 ; implementation began August 8
Mazar-e-Sharif	Trash Collection	Procurement	Bid opening held August 6 and 9
Pul-e-Khumri	Park Construction	Procurement	Bid opening held August 7-8
Sar-e-Pul	Market Improvement	Implementing	Kick off meeting held August 5 ; implementation began August 8
Sheberghan	Public Latrines	Implementing	Kick off meeting held August 6 ; implementation began August 8
Taloqan	Park Improvement	Implementing	Kick off meeting held August 7 ; implementation began August 8

Third Round Sustainable Service Delivery Improvement Sub-projects —Status as of August 30, 2012			
Municipality	Sub-project Type	Status	Notes
Aybak	Rehabilitation of Football Stadium	Concept in development	Concept document drafted
Faizabad	Park Improvement	Concept in development	Concept document in development
Kunduz	Steel Grates for Drainage Covers	Concept in development	Concept document submitted
Maymana	Construction of Bus Terminal	Concept in development	Land acquisition still under review
Mazar-e-Sharif	Construction of a Park in District 8	Concept in development	Concept document in development
Pul-e-Khumri	Construction of Public Latrines	Concept in development	Feasibility studies of project location
Sar-e-Pul	<i>Project concept being revised</i>	Concept in development	Project in the selection process
Sheberghan	Central Park Improvement and Sports Area	Concept in development	Concept document drafted
Taloqan	Construction of a Parking Lot near the Municipal Park	Concept in development	Concept document in development

Sar-e-Pul Post-Flood Assistance Project

Work continued in August developing sub-projects for the Post Flood Assistance effort in Sar-e-Pul. Technical designs and specifications for the vehicle bridge were completed by DRRD in August and are now under review. Documentation for the design and construction of the road and culverts rehabilitation projects, the construction of the footbridge, and the construction of the flood protection wall were all completed, and the RFPs were released on August 16. Progress on the Canal Cleaning sub-project was also significant this month, with the municipality finalizing the list of unskilled laborers from the community that were affected by the flood who will provide the workforce for the project. Following the bid opening and evaluation for the Canal Cleaning project on August 6, the pre-construction meeting for the project was held with the subcontractor and the municipality on August 28, with implementation of the project scheduled to begin in early September.

RU-N advisors have also begun preparations for a public outreach campaign on the post-flood projects and developing draft communication strategies for the canal cleaning project and overall municipal efforts and responsibilities. RU-N advisors have also begun working with municipal officials in developing a municipal newsletter to update citizens on municipal activities.

REVENUE GENERATION

The business registration process continued in Aybak, Faizabad, Taloqan, Sar-e-Pul and Pul-e-Khumri. All municipalities except Sar-e-Pul have completed the printing of tax bills and Sar-e-Pul is close to completion in their printing process. All municipalities have transitioned to investigating options for increasing the rate of business owners who are paying their taxes at the bank.

Details on business registration and licensing, including a comparison with the previous year, are listed in the table below:

Municipality	Registered Businesses and Licenses Issued (Baseline-1390)	Newly Registered Businesses (1391)	Printed Tax Bills	# of Licenses Issued	Increase in Number of Businesses Registered	% Increase in Businesses Registered
Faizabad	884	2106	All	406	1222	138%
Taloqan	1600	4510	All	1500	2910	182%
Pul-e-Khumri	3300	3836	All	891	536	16%
Aybak	1395	1924	All	1010	529	38%
Sar-e-Pul	1184	1555	1450	13	371	31%
Grand Total	8363	13931		3820	5568	66.5%

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

This month, RU-N advisors focused on anti-corruption training as part of crosscutting issues, which began with a Fraud Awareness ToT on August 6-8, followed by individual municipal workshops on fraud awareness held from August 15-30. RU-N advisors in Mazar-e-Sharif also began holding the pre-project survey for their second round sub-project this month, and are planning to finalize the surveys by early September.



RU-N advisors in Mazar-e-Sharif hold a pre-project survey on August 29, 2012, to gather citizen perspectives on the upcoming trash collection RU-N sub-project in District 3.

PLANNED SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES

RU-N advisors will focus on the following activities in September:

- Progress on RU-N sub-projects will continue in September on second and third round projects. Implementation will continue on the 6 second round projects that began in August, with ongoing monitoring from RU-N advisors in collaboration with municipal officials and citizen representatives. For the remaining 3 second round projects in Pul-e-Khumri, Mazar-e-Sharif and Faizabad, the procurement process is scheduled to be completed during September and implementation to begin shortly after. Third round projects will also continue in the development phase, with concepts being finalized and submitted for approval throughout September. RU-N is also planning to launch the selection process for the fourth round of RU-N sub-projects beginning in late September.
- RU-N will continue to implement the Sar-e-Pul Post-Flood Assistance Project, with the implementation of the Canal Cleaning sub-project scheduled to begin in early September. The procurement process for the road rehabilitation projects, the construction of the footbridge and the flood protection wall is scheduled to be completed in September as well, with the bids closing in early September and bid openings and evaluations scheduled soon after. Also in September will be the solicitation, bid opening and selection of subcontractors for the reconstruction of the vehicle bridge and, as well as for construction inspection and testing.
- Gender Mainstreaming Training will be held for embedded advisors in September, and then RU-N advisors will begin implementing gender awareness and mainstreaming training at the municipal level with support from the RU-N Community Engagement and Technical Team during September and October.
- RU-N advisors will continue to support the business registration and licensing process in Aybak, Faizabad, Taloqan, Sar-e-Pul and Pul-e-Khumri, and continue to follow up with municipalities in developing enforcement mechanisms for the payment of business registration taxes.
- The RU-N team will finalize Municipal Economic Profiles and present them to key stakeholders and municipal officials.

APPENDIX: RU-N ONE-PAGERS

Each month RU-N plans to highlight particular achievements, successes, or unique aspects of the program. One such story is below.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN

USAID 50 ANNIVERSARY

SNAPSHOT

Maymana Women Lobby for Local Park

Citizen advisory groups are a forum for women to have their voices heard on municipal priorities.



Photo:
Citizen representatives, including local women's leaders, participate in the final inspection for the USAID-funded renovations made to the Women's Park in Maymana on August 7, 2012.

Local women's groups have strongly supported the selection of the Women's Park as a municipal project for USAID support, recognizing the need for public spaces for women to socialize.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Women leaders in the city of Maymana in Faryab Province have successfully lobbied their municipal government to rehabilitate a local women's park. As a result of their efforts, on July 8, 2012, construction on a Women's Park selected by the Maymana Municipality and supported by USAID reached substantial completion and was handed over the municipality for public use.

Local women's groups strongly supported the selection of this project, recognizing a key lack of public space for women in the city. Many years ago, women had used a park area in the center of the city, but it fell into disrepair as many women stopped visiting due to safety concerns. With an improved environment in the city, however, many women now want a usable public space again.

"Women don't have many places to socialize," said Ms. Sharifa Azimi, the Director for the Faryab Women's Affairs Department. "The only place for women to socialize is when some women gather in the cemeteries on Wednesdays to pray," she added.

Ms. Azimi and other local women leaders took action to address this public need by suggesting the renovation of a women's park during a Service Delivery Advisory Group (SDAG) meeting, which is a citizen advisory forum organized by the Maymana Municipality to discuss priorities for projects that could receive support from the USAID- financed program RAMP UP North.

"I fought strongly for the renovation of this park, even though some participants wanted other projects," said Ms. Farukhlega, a member of the SDAG and the Faryab Women's Leadership Committee. "The best thing about this park is that it can be a place for women to gather during market days, which are held twice a week," she said.

The Maymana Municipality also responded to the women's request during the SDAG meeting by supporting the Women's Park construction and also committing funds from their annual development budget to fund a boundary wall for the park.

"These park improvements are sustainable because the municipality fund park maintenance from renting small shops that women can use to sell their handicrafts," said Ms. Azimi.

Women's engagement has been a focus of the RAMP UP North program, which works to strengthen the public's relationship with municipalities through improved service delivery and community engagement mechanisms like the SDAG.